

VISIT...

Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan

Cactus and Succulent Plants

Compiled by Sara Oldfield

IUCN/SSC Cactus and Succulent Specialist Group



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Foreword

The sight was depressing. We looked closely at the huge pile of dead cacti to see if any had survived, but none had.

Looking back, I had seen the destruction of cacti had been removed and carried away, but nowhere nearly as many plants had been ruthlessly removed and left to rot as at this cemetery.

At this cemetery, most of the dead cacti were there because of the plants, but at other times as land is converted to agriculture, bulldozed for houses or highways, or needed to create pasture.

For 40 years I have travelled throughout the arid regions of North and South America in search of cacti. I have been fortunate to see some of the rarest people who fail to understand their importance in the wild and who do not care if they are destroyed.

I have seen cacti and succulents face terrible threats as the human population grows and land is converted from its natural state. Scientists are struggling to learn what they can do to save some of these populations.

Many cacti and succulents are being collected and sold as houseplants, but many are being sold as wildflowers to make a wider market.

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Dr. Edward F. Anderson
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Acknowledgements

The preparation of this SSC Action Plan has been a collaborative and largely voluntary venture to which many operations have given very generously.

Thanks also go to those who provided the initial additional information, review, and provision of illustrations is greatly appreciated. In turn, the authors have consulted widely in the preparation of this document.

Thanks also go to all those who have supported the SSC Action Plan in some way, together with many members of the IOS and experts in conservation organisations. Sincere thanks to everyone involved. Special thanks are due to

Taylor for guidance and encouragement in developing the

Action Plan, and to Henry Stramm and Steven Stramm for their support and advice throughout the process.

Thanks also go to Greg Lyons and Bob Welton for final

the Spanish translation, and Paul Stramm and Barbara Stramm for the English translation.

Thanks also go to the following individuals for their support and advice throughout the process: David D. Smith, G. L. B. Smith, D. J. D. Smith, G. L. B. Smith, and World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

Financial support for preparation of the Action Plan was provided by the Peter Scott 1969/1988 Action Plan fund.

